

Preschool

Having Fun with a Wide Variety of Learning Topics and Tools

Preschool age is a time for immense learning--whether you provide formal activities or not. Children 3 - 5 years old will be learning more about the world around them every day, just by using all their senses. But there are definitely some things parents can do to increase their learning of desired topics.

Here are some general preschool teaching suggestions:

Read aloud a *lot* of **picture books**. Have a regular reading time/times. Let the child pick out his own picture book stories, often. Give yourself, as the teacher, permission to pick out some titles, too-- this could be for part of a school routine.

Provide a variety of hands-on learning and **free play materials**. Don't be afraid to give a preschooler some "assignments" with these, for part of their schoolwork. Also, keep in mind that you--or an older sibling-- will need to introduce new materials and help your young child learn what can be done with them.

Some examples of materials for preschool learning and free play:

Blocks, interlocking **construction toys**

Miniature plastic people and animals, toy cars and boats and houses and airplanes and barns and . . . etc.

Felt Figures (of people, animals, cars, houses, trees, etc.)

Pattern Blocks-- with guided use: a parent/sibling can show how to make designs, and/or can show how to use task cards such as Cuisinaire's *Pattern Animals*.

Games: memory match card games, simple board games, "I Spy" (with colors, materials that things are made of, etc.)-- for example, "I spy something made of wood/something red/something very small . . ."

Music Play: using a variety of rhythm instruments, and/or **singing** together

Making Pictures and Crafts: You can introduce **different types of art media**-- chalk, colored pencils, oil pastels, crayons, tempera paint, salt dough clay, various kinds of paper . . .

and also **Different techniques**--

learning to cut with scissors, gluing to make many types of collage pictures, printmaking with paint or inkpads, lacing together craft foam pieces or felt pieces

Puzzles-- with large wooden or cardboard pieces

Dolls, Stuffed Animals, and Puppets

Alphabet Letter Materials-- for guided practice: cardboard or felt or wooden or plastic letters, letter flashcards, letter-picture matching games

Number Materials-- for guided practice: cardboard or felt or wooden or plastic numbers, number flashcards, number-picture matching games

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